

## China and California Announce Collaboration to Advance Stem Cell Research toward Cures

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San Francisco, Ca., October 19, 2009—The California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state's stem cell agency, and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) signed an agreement yesterday to collaborate on stem cell research.

The agreement was signed at CIRM headquarters by Jin Xiaoming, MOST's Director General for its Department of International Cooperation, and Alan Trounson, President of CIRM.

Given the considerable investment that both CIRM and MOST are making in stem cell research, the two agencies expect to create synergies by making it easier for Chinese and Californian scientists to form collaborative teams.

"Our collaboration will benefit patients in our countries and patients around the globe," said Wan Gang, Minister, MOST. "We should be aware that stem cell research will require a long-term effort and basic research to address unanswered questions. When we move to medical therapies it must be with the highest standards."

"One of CIRM's primary goals is to accelerate the field of stem cell research as a whole, and in some instances we can do this more effectively through collaborations that involve the best scientific endeavors, regardless of geography," said CIRM's Trounson. "China is developing a major national program in stem cells and regenerative medicine that can be effectively matched with California's excellence in stem cell science that is rapidly evolving in academic and biotechnology settings. I would expect major developments for patients to occur through this new partnership."

The agreement will make it easier for researchers in California and China to obtain joint funding to broaden the potential pool of expertise that can be applied toward research in a specific area. It is expected that researchers in both jurisdictions will be invited to form teams that will apply jointly for funding through a process that builds upon routine CIRM and MOST procedures. For those that are approved, CIRM will fund the California researchers and MOST will fund the Chinese researchers.

The agreement notes that both agencies will assure the research is conducted in "compliance with the highest standards for ethical conduct and safety at all stages of research including clinical study."

"California voters should be proud that their action in 2004 to make California the first state in the nation to support and fund stem cell research is resulting in partnerships across the nation and around the world that will speed up the discovery of therapies for some of today's most debilitating diseases," said Governor Schwarzenegger. "I am looking forward to seeing the potentially life-saving results from this new partnership with China."

"China has made a major commitment to biomedical research, and stem cell research in particular," noted Robert Klein, chairman of the CIRM governing board. "China will now join six other nations—Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada, Victoria Australia, Spain and Japan—as a partner with California in accelerating critical stem cell research to relieve the suffering of patients and families throughout the world."

**About CIRM** CIRM was established in 2005 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 307 research and facility grants totaling more than \$781 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world.

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